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ABSTRACT

The usual approach to improving discipline in the schools is the repressive approach -- more rules, stricter enforcement, more efficient pupil surveillance, suspensions of privileges, or additional rules imposed by the board of education. School administrators, faced with increased public concern and lacking well-defined alternatives to such repressive measures, tend to accede to public pressure, thereby making matters worse. This paper is designed to serve the educator who wants to take positive rather than negative steps towards improving school discipline. The projects suggested here, taken together, should add up to a comprehensive effort to modify the learning environment. Three major pieces of this environment are considered here -- the belief and value system of the school, the school's communications system, and the manner in which decisions are made within the institution. Significant changes in these important components of the institution should do much to remedy the causes of discipline problems. (Author)

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IMPROVING DISCIPLINE IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

A Catalogue of Alternatives to Repression

by
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and
John M. Jenkins

Editor's Note: This project represents one of a series of plans designed to improve the secondary school's environment. Each plan is organized by a development team created through the auspices of the CFK Ltd. program area on Projects to Improve the Quality of the School Environment.

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INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Public and Professional Concern

A recent CFK, Ltd. sponsored national survey of public opinion, implemented by Gallup International of Princeton, New Jersey, [1] verifies what many educators have suspected for some time: that the public, as well as teachers and administrators, is extremely concerned about the present status of discipline in the schools. One objective of the survey was to determine the major complaints against the schools. The findings were conclusive. *"The greatest complaint against the schools of the country at the present time is lack of discipline."*[2]

Secondary school educators generally share the public's concern over discipline, particularly at a time when the principal's authority seems ill-defined and eroding. Today's principal, before making decisions about discipline, finds it necessary to negotiate with the teacher's union and, perhaps, with his district's lawyer. He is no longer sure, for example, under what conditions he can search a pupil's locker; nor is he as confident about procedures to suspend or expel a student. Today, the principal's authority seems to be defined mainly by what he thinks he can get away with.

Yet, the principal is subjected to increased pressure from his community, from his students, and from his staff to do something about discipline. Most requests for action imply a *get tough* policy. In times of stress there appears to be a strong tendency to revert to the military model. Perhaps the tendency of schoolmen to react to stress with muscle stems, in part, from their simply not knowing what else to do. How *do* you improve discipline through other than the usual repressive methods? This paper presents several suggestions.

CFK Ltd.'s Project to Improve the Quality of the Secondary School Environment

This paper is an outgrowth of CFK Ltd.'s strong concern with improving the quality of the secondary school environment. A number of projects, stimulated by CFK Ltd., have been initiated. Several papers have been commissioned[3] and a mini-grant program has been launched to operationally define modules of a quality learning environment. These and related activities have sought, as their central focus, to find answers to the following questions:

> What would be the flavor and character of a secondary school if it were primarily a humane endeavor and part of the enterprise?
>
> How would such a school be organized?
>
> What would be its priorities?
>
> In what ways would such an enterprise be different from present schools?

Project activities reflect the following assumptions:

> That the school's objectives can and must be more attuned to improving human relations and individuality for all, and
>
> That the actual environment in which the educational process takes place should reflect this focus.

The objective is to define several elements which comprise a quality secondary school environment in which human needs and values are given high priority. This paper will consider three such elements.

The school's methods of operationally defining its institutional belief and value systems

> One reason a pupil may become a discipline problem is that the school does not stand for any important principles which he can accept. In most schools, it is virtually impossible to discover what the school believes in or what it values. Written statements of philosophy are too often composed of banalities which are too vague to be used as guides to decision making.

The school's decision making processes

> Another reason a pupil may become a discipline problem is that he has little or nothing to say about decisions which are made by others on his behalf. Pupils typically have little to say about how their time will be scheduled, what adult talent will be available to help them, what they will study, how they will study it, when they will be expected to finish their work, when they will be able to go to the restroom, how they will dress, or where and to whom they will speak.

The school's communications systems

> Another reason a pupil may become a discipline problem is that lines of communication are functioning badly across hierarchical, clique, racial, and social class barriers. If communications could be improved, people would better understand what the school stands for, and they would understand one another better. The result would be less suspicion, less distrust, less fear, less hate, and less hostility; and discipline problems in a school feed on suspicion, distrust, fear, hate, and hostility.

OBJECTIVES

Secondary school educators launching activities to improve discipline might well consider three objectives against which progress might be assessed.

How will the observable, measurable behavior of students change if the project is a success?

How will staff members behave differently if the project is a success? and

How will the school as an institution change if the project is a success?

Most projects to improve pupil discipline deal primarily with student behavorial objectives. It is easier for staff members to make plans to change other people than it is to make plans to change themselves or their school. Objectives which may prove helpful to educators designing projects to improve pupil discipline include:

Student objectives

This project will be considered successful to the extent that:

The number of unexcused incidents of student tardiness decreases.

The number of unexcused incidents of absences decreases.

Acts of agression towards other pupils and staff members decreases.

Acts of vandalism occur less frequently and result in less damage.

Pupils accept increasing responsibility for their own actions regarding non-instructional activities.

Fewer pupils are referred to the discipline office, and the reasons for referral become less serious.

The percentage of pupils voluntarily attending school-sponsored events increases.

Staff objectives

The project to improve discipline will be considered successful to the extent that teachers can:

Refer fewer pupils to the discipline office.

Give fewer failing grades and incompletes.

Spend less time monitoring halls, bus loading, etc.

Encounter fewer class interruptions related to pupil misbehavior.

Feel less need to contact parents relative to discipline.

and to the extent that administrators:

Need to expel or suspend fewer students.

Succeed in eliminating corporal punishment.

Need to request fewer parent conferences for disciplinary or attendance problems.

See fewer pupils about disciplinary or attendance problems, and

Spend less time enforcing rules.

Objectives for the school

The project will be considered successful to the extent that the school:

Becomes more unified as more and more people representing a wide range of cliques, social classes and hierarchical levels take an active part by

- participating in school events
- participating in decision making activities
- communicating more frequently.

Becomes less repressive in character, and

Becomes more clearly identifiable in terms of its value and belief systems.

Rationale and Implications of the Objective

Many causes of pupil behavior problems are deeply rooted in the nature of the institution itself. Pupil behavior can best be modified if the organizational and psychological climate to which pupils react is modified. Procedures should be directed towards building, within the school, a more healthy organizational climate [4] than towards helping disruptive pupils adjust to a less healthy one.

The position that the school's efforts to improve discipline should be directed towards changing the nature of the institution is consistent with the positions of a rather large number of authorities in educational psychology.

The relationship of the individual to what is external to him has been treated by many writers. Their findings indicate that what previously appeared to be a fundamental split between the individual and his environment was in reality a conspiratorial arrangement in which each, the individual and the environment, had an impact on the other. Instead of talking about the individual and the environment, one can speak of the individual environment as if it were one continuous entity. Dewey and Bentley made this point when they wrote of the transactional procedure of seeing together what heretofore had been perceived as separate entities.[5] Likewise, the recent observations of McLuhan regarding the notion of explosion-implosion implies that what is extended into an organism's environment comes back into the organism and affects its perception, ergo its behavior.[6]

More relevant to the school organization Glasser's suggestion that the education system presents innumerable obstacles to the development of success identities in the students. He contends that if the increasing number of students do not break out of the failure

cycle then society is doomed to produce an overwhelming number of alienated and lonely people.[7] Combs[8] and Maslow[9] make a similar point in discussing the function of the school in helping develop adequate personalities and self-actualizing people, respectively. Kelley speaks of the self-other duality engendered by schooling which tends to separate individuals from the very interaction necessary to help them to become fully functioning people.[10]

Too often, educators, in planning activities designed to improve discipline, plan to treat symptoms instead of causes. The kinds of objectives suggested in this paper imply that progress will be measured through a monitoring of symptoms, but that activities to improve discipline will be directed primarily towards remedying basic causes.

Some Suggested Means to Achieve the Objectives

Three clusters of activities or projects are suggested as means of achieving the kinds of objectives outlined above: projects to define operationally the belief and value system of the school, projects to widen participation in decision making, and projects to improve communications.

No suggestions are made for curriculum reform. Recommendations for individualizing and humanizing the curriculum have been made by others.

Two kinds of suggestions are made. The first cluster entitled *Getting Started* is most likely to be appropriate for a school still in the initial stages of flexibility.[11] Such a school might be expected to be operating with a conventional period schedule, a conventional staffing plan, *tokenism* in sharing decision making with pupils, a thick procedures handbook, classrooms with one teacher and twenty-five to thirty pupils, study halls, etc.

The second cluster is addressed to schools that have made substantial progress in organizational flexibility.

Projects to define operationally the beliefs and values of the school.

Most statements of philosophy and objectives are written by a committee, published somewhere in the teachers' handbook, filed and forgotten . . . and rightly so, because in the form in which they are written such statements can rarely serve as guides to decision making by staff, students, or anyone else.

Many statements of philosophy, for example, contain a sentence something like this:

> "It is the objective of the _____ School to educate each student to the limits of his potential."

Such a statement can be used to justify a strong guidance program, remedial English, private music instruction, isolation booths for discipline problems, free breakfasts, clerical aides for teachers, religious training during school hours, or publicly financed seeing eye dogs. The statement means little because it can be construed to mean almost anything. Somewhat more useful might be statements such as the following:

> "We, the students and staff of the _____ School believe:
>
> That pupils learn at varying rates; therefore the curriculum should be organized in such a way that some pupils can proceed more rapidly than others.
>
> That the size of the learning group should be appropriate to its purpose, or
>
> That the kind of supervision provided by the staff for a student activity should be appropriate to the level of maturity of the students participating."[12]

Getting Started

Projects such as the following would be appropriate to schools desiring to launch activities designed to define operationally the school's beliefs and values.

Form the usual review and rewrite groups but perhaps with some additional talent available such as:

- A staff member chosen for his special interest in translating belief statements into measureable objectives.
- Students representing various cliques.
- A specialist in the psychology of learning.

Organize a development team or a design team[13] to provide leadership and support for school improvement projects. The team can accept, as one of its first projects, the redefinition of the school's statements of beliefs and values so that developmental projects can be appropriately designed and evaluated.

Use the National Assessment Citizenship Objectives[14] as a point of departure in writing the school's philosophy. Develop student and, perhaps, staff survey forms designed to chart the school's progress in achieving each objective adopted.

Hold workshops in which teachers and pupils interested in working for school improvement evaluate existing statements of philosophy from the point of view of their usefulness as guides to decision making and to project design.

Implement a survey of inconsistencies — i.e. a survey designed to analyze recent important decisions which have been made in the school. The analyses should be designed to show how decisions are rooted in conflicting belief and value systems. Such a study, done perhaps as a term paper or master's thesis by a faculty member, could provide valuable information for the writing groups as they seek ways to express more accurately what the school stands for.

Encourage staff members and students involved in existing projects for school improvement to evaluate existing statements of institutional values and beliefs and suggest improvements.

Suggested Activities for the More Flexible School

With strong administrative leadership and support, develop and adopt a statement of beliefs and values which clearly communicates what the flexible school stands for.

Organize, with the assistance of the school's development or design team, six to eight school improvement projects designed to modify significantly the school's communications system and decision making processes. Encourage the leaders of such projects to write objectives for the projects which are clearly consistent with one or more of the school's belief and value statements. Provide planning and evaluative assistance to such project groups from talent available from the development team.

Hold workshops for staff and students on the topic of rational decision making. Encourage, through such workshops, the making of decisions regarding school improvement projects on the basis of the stated beliefs and values of the institution and the actual outcomes of project activities (as compared with outcomes which had been predicted). The purpose of the workshops would be to link operationally the decision making apparatus of the school to the stated belief and value system of the school. (What the school stands for educationally becomes clear to people only when they begin to make decisions on the basis of statements describing the institutional beliefs and values).

Hold workshops for leaders of student organizations and other student leaders designed to assist them in launching school improvement projects which are consistent with the school's statements of institutional beliefs and values.

Projects to Widen Participation in Decision Making

The school's statements of beliefs and values should clearly commit the school to the twin concepts of decentralized decision making and decentralized assumption of responsibility for implementation of decisions.

Most school staffs are accustomed to sitting around thinking up things for other people to do. This is familiar to all administrators who attempt to delegate decision making. It occurs when the staff thinks up things for the principal to do and the principal thinks up things for the staff to do. Everyone delegates decision making and implementation tasks to everyone else and no one does any work.

There is a danger that, while the staff and administration spend a lot of time delegating decision making, the school will become less instead of more effective in dealing with pupil discipline problems.

The extent to which decision making can be decentralized depends greatly on the degree of understanding and acceptance of staff and students of what the school as an institution believes in and values and the degree of willingness of everyone in the school to make decisions consistent with these beliefs and values and to do the work necessary to implement the decisions.

Following are some suggested projects which can be designed to foster responsible, rational decision making in the school.

Getting Started

The school with limited flexibility might launch several projects such as these:

Organize student council (or student-faculty) task forces to assume clearly defined responsibilities for school improvement such as:

Improving written school policies regarding student affairs (e.g. attendance policies, dress policies, policies guiding the formation of clubs, and sponsoring of social events).

Developing evaluative criteria describing good teaching.

Listening to and ruling on student grievances.

Studying and recommending solutions to school problems.

Encourage the staff sponsor of such task forces to use each project as a means to teach rational responsible decision making.

Allow students to elect one hour a day of unstructured time, thus providing pupils with a limited experience in deciding how to utilize time wisely. Implement a *clinical period* designed to enable student needs to be matched with appropriate staff talent. Such a period can provide pupils with limited opportunities to make decisions, with assistance from the staff regarding how they will utilize time.[15] Students may choose from a variety of worthwhile activities, including, perhaps minicourses, extra curricular activities, or large and small group activities offered by staff members.

Planning for such a program begins with a survey of currently underutilized staff talents and of pupil interests and needs.

Offer a *Flex-day* program.[16] This idea is basically the same as the clinical period idea except that the flexibility lasts for one entire day.

Organize an EPIC[17] (Educational Participation In Communities) program in which pupils, staff members, and parents provide coordinated volunteer services to cultural, educational, social welfare, and secretarial agencies.

Expand the number of activities offered and open them to anyone who wishes to participate. Launch membership recruiting drives to encourage out-group members to join at least one activity. Modify existing activities so that they are more appealing to out-group members. Democratize student organizations so that decision making within each organization is more broadly shared. Launch school-wide discussions regarding ways decision making within student organizations might be decentralized. Initiate one or two pilot projects designed to break the monopoly of the bright conformists who typically run student organizations.

Suggested Projects for the More Flexible School

Offer mini-courses on the process of rational decision making. Stimulate independent study projects on the topic of decision making.

Develop a student-advisor system and train the advisors to help students improve the quality of their own decision making. Invite qualified volunteer parents to serve as pupil advisors.

Widen the opportunities for student decision making by increasing the number of options available to students during their unscheduled time. Increase the number of open laboratories by scheduling such laboratories to no more than three-fourths capacity. Encourage the staff to develop Unipacs, learning activities packages, and contracts which contain clearly defined options and encourage pupil decision making as they choose various options.[18] Encourage pupils to pursue independent study projects ("Education by Appointment").[19] Organize courses of study in such a way that pupils may make decisions regarding how slowly or rapidly to proceed through the course.

Expand options available for students on unscheduled time to include activities to take place in places other than the school with people who are not teachers.

Form Glasser-type[20] problem solving groups as a means of teaching the rational decision making processes and as a means of helping pupils help one another become progressively more responsible.

Offer student-organized forums, assemblies, seminars on an optional attendance basis. Encourage the staff and student sponsors of such activities to analyze the decision making processes they went through as they planned, implemented, and evaluated such activities.

Encourage the school's development team to assist staff members engaged in school improvement projects in making rational decisions regarding the project.[21]

Form a completely new student government each year thus increasing the number of opportunities for decision making by students in student government. Organize more than one government in the school at the same time.[22]

Form a faculty-parent-student council to supplement the student government.[23] Invite the council to form task forces for planning and implementing school improvement projects.

Form student service corporations using, perhaps, existing Junior Achievement programs as models. Such corporations might, for example, handle some custodial services, provide typing services for pupils and teachers or tutor pupils having difficulty. Build in ways to encourage out-group members to help plan and operate such organizations.

Projects to Improve Communications in the School

Most schools are organized in such a way that open communication across age, clique, hierarchical, physical, racial, and subject matter barriers is difficult or impossible. The typical secondary school's organizational plan, for instance, places faculty members for from four to six hours a day in isolated classrooms together with groups of from twenty-five to thirty-five pupils. Meaningful communications within the conventional classroom is difficult at best. The group size is usually too large, and the physical layout of the room is not conducive to discussion.

Among pupils, the well-scrubbed, bright conformists who typically fill the sanctioned student leadership positions in the school are successfully isolated from those pupils usually referred to as *out of it*. The clique structure of the school usually will reflect fairly accurately the clique structure of the community.

Pupils who see themselves as out of the mainstream of school life tend to want to fight the system. Out-group pupils, however, if given a chance, can assume a great deal of responsibility for their own behavior and for improving the school and their ideas for improving the school are often very valuable.

The following suggestions illustrate the kinds of projects and activities a school can launch to improve communications.

Getting Started

A variety of kinds of activity can be encouraged in the school with limited flexibility.

Organize a series of confrontation groups or T-groups[24] designed to encourage communications across clique and hierarchial lines. Some of these groups might be primarily for students; others primarily for staff.

Arrange a series of appointments between verbal out-group members and the principal. Set aside three hours a week of the principal's time for the purpose of opening communications between the administration of the school and pupils who do not like school.

Devise or acquire a communications instrument which will chart the communications structure of the staff of the school (several such instruments are available). Initiate projects which will include staff members who are identified as isolates by the study. Enlist the assistance of the best communicators in launching projects for improving pupil discipline. Involving teachers who are good communicators in innovative projects increases the likelihood of the project being understood and accepted by non-project teachers.

Initiate a *faculty helper* system for the school's most negative pupils. Each faculty member names from one to four pupils who are discipline problems with whom he feels he can communicate. He agrees to meet with these pupils weekly, to listen to them, and to offer his support and assistance. The *helper* utilizes techniques of achievement motivation[25] and other positive reinforcing techniques to help the pupil perceive of himself more positively.

Organize discussion classes, meeting twice or three times a week, but with no more than fifteen pupils enrolled, to replace conventional classes of thirty which meet daily.

Encourage the students to elect an *ombudsman* — an autonomous individual ultimately responsible neither to students nor administrators — someone whose sole aim is an equitable system, not furthering the ends of either group.[26] Such a person, who could be a student, a student teacher, or a community person, works constantly to keep communication lines open between students and the school administration.

Take selected pupils and staff members on weekend retreats. Operate a summer camp program or a school-year outdoor education program. Use the informal settings provided by such programs to stimulate discussion on school problems and issues.

Improve communications with parents by sending home *mini-report cards* with space provided only for positive comments regarding a pupil's accomplishments. Such a card can be sent home at any time by any staff member.

Suggested Projects for the More Flexible School

Operate *rolling seminars* — discussion groups open to any pupil or staff member on unscheduled time. Anyone can come to such a seminar, discuss with the people there problems or issues he wishes to introduce, and leave when he wishes to go elsewhere. Such seminars often last as long as three or four hours even though most participants will remain in the group only twenty to forty minutes.

Operate a "Hyde Park" area where pupils can make speeches during certain designated hours.

Encourage the formation of more than one newspaper in the school.

Hold student council meetings during the school day and invite anyone who wishes to attend. (In a flexible school such meetings would not be disruptive because no one would have to leave class.)[27]

Open several informal discussion areas in the school — the cafeteria, student lounges, and informal reading areas.

Organize the school so that a basic organizational unit for students is not the class of twenty-five to thirty, but the learning team of two to eight pupils. Replace classrooms with learning laboratories and discussion rooms where communications can be more open.[28]

Encourage independent study activities on the part of all pupils, especially those who feel negatively about school.

Enlist the aid of a resource person from a nearby campus, or possibly from the district office and initiate a comprehensive study of the effect of competitive activities in your school on the attitudes of out-group members. Use the results of the study as a guide to action as you reorganize the competitive activities in the school.

Discourage school practices which intensify clique formation. Eliminate or extensively modify such groups as the National Honor Society, the cheerleaders, the drum majorettes,

and the lettermen's club. Devise ways to increase representation of out-group pupils in the student council and in other *prestige* organizations or replace them with more democratic ones. De-emphasize public award giving which strengthens feelings of alienation of out-group members. Replace the present achievement recognition system with one which emphasizes more immediate and widespread rewards for tasks well done.

Components of the Suggested Alternate Learning Environment

Activities and projects such as those just suggested will substantially change the character of the various learning environments within the school. In general, it can be expected that these changes will be from the more highly structured, rigid, environments we have come to expect to find in schools to more flexible, open environments. Following are some examples of how various components of the school's learning environment might be expected to change as the school makes significant progress towards eliminating discipline problems.

The Discipline-Attendance Office

from:	**to:**
a place where students are sent because they have broken school rules or disrupted classes	a place where students come to participate in planning activities for school improvement (no longer called the "discipline office")
a place presided over by an assistant principal who punishes and admonishes	a place presided over by a learning environment specialist who, with the help of pupils and staff, works to modify the environment so that discipline and attendance problems diminish and eventually disappear
rigid, restrictive physical facilities (a counter, lots of walls, benches to sit and wait on, etc.)	open, flexible facilities which encourage maximum pupil participation in planning, discussing, implementing projects, and evaluating

The Classroom

from:	**to:**
a place where students spend most of their time listening to the teacher	a place where students spend most of their time listening to one another (as well as to their teacher), expressing ideas and concepts, inquiring, investigating, organizing information, and evaluating
a place which provides few options for learning activities	a place which provides many options for learning activities. The pupil may have something to say about what he learns, how he learns it, where he will learn it, and who will help him learn it
a place where pupil performance is evaluated by the teacher	a place where pupils evaluate their own performance with the assistance of the teacher
a place in which the psychological environment is closed and restrictive (lots of rules to be obeyed, movement restricted, freedom to speak severely limited, etc.)	a place where the psychological climate is open and less restrictive (few rules, emphasis on pupil self-regulation, task-centered atmosphere possible because activities are perceived by learners as being worthwhile)
a place where the physical facilities are small, confining, depressingly "institutional"	a place where space is open, ample, and furnished in such a way that pupil interaction with others and with learning materials is facilitated

Student Government

from:	**to:**
an organization composed exclusively of bright conformists elected on the basis of popularity	an organization with flexible *open* membership which provides an opportunity for the active involvement of all pupils in decision making affecting them

a faculty manipulated organization	a student operated organization—with faculty support to which has been delegated clearly defined powers and responsibilities
an organization concerned primarily with the school's activity programs (except perhaps athletics, which are faculty controlled)	an organization participating with staff and administration in significant school improvement projects
Student Activities **from:**	**to:**
a comparatively few activities with restrictive membership	many activities with little or no restriction on membership
faculty initiated and faculty dominated	student or faculty initiated and both student and faculty involved in implementation (pupils are given a choice of climates — authoritarian or democratic — in which to work)
emphasis in the program on activities which emphasize conformity, academic achievement, and competition	inclusion in the program of a variety of activities stressing creativity, social growth, and communication and understanding across clique and racial barriers

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Suggested Organizational Modifications

The way in which a school is organized strongly affects communications and decision making. Organizational barriers can be as effective as physical barriers in limiting communications. In authoritarian, highly hierarchial institutions, for example, the unwritten rule that only good news goes up operates to keep the principal unaware of many problems.

The kinds of activities suggested in this paper function best in a school which has been organized to encourage open communication and de-centralized decision making. Most schools could benefit greatly from modification of present staffing patterns, ways pupils are grouped for instruction, the way the curriculum is organized, and the schedule.

Suggested modifications of the staffing plan

Organize interdisciplinary teaching teams with flexible membership to encourage communications across subject matter lines. Gradually eliminate traditional departments as these teams prove their effectiveness. Organize team-taught learning laboratories.

De-emphasize hierarchy by organizing non-hierarchical teaching teams instead of the hierarchical ones commonly suggested.[29]

Facilitate communications across hierarchical barriers by reducing the number of functioning hierarchical levels. Develop a "flat" organizational plan designed to encourage decentralized decision making.[30]

Replace the principal's advisory committee, if one exists, with a school-based development team designed to stimulate and support orderly innovation. Organize a number of task forces composed of both pupils and teachers to plan, implement and evaluate school improvement projects.

Reorganize the administrative staff, perhaps along the lines recommended by Dr. J. Lloyd Trump.[31] so that the principal can personally assume leadership in promoting shared decision making and open communication in the school.

Provide additional staff for the discipline-attendance office so that the assistant principal can assume a leadership role in student government and in the activity program. (The image of the discipline office, over a period of time, is to be changed from that of a center of repression to that of a center for planning for school improvement, insofar as student affairs is concerned.)

Provide the student council, or the organization which has replaced it, with an increased number of sponsors. Choose people as sponsors who are especially interested in proliferating rational decision making throughout the school.

Decrease the amount of staff time presently invested in *snob-appeal* type activities which emphasize conformity and competition.

Replace the departmental organizational plan of the school, if one exists, with a divisional plan designed to open communications across subject matter barriers.[32] Once the reorganization is complete, the school may have

only two or three divisions (sciences and humanities or sciences, humanities and the practical arts). In medium sized or larger high schools each division can be supervised by a full time person instead of by several part-time teacher-supervisors.

Suggested Modifications of the Way Pupils are Grouped

Replace the typical class of from twenty-five to thirty-five members and one teacher with discussion groups of no more than fifteen members and with learning laboratories where the basic organizational unit is the learning team of from two to five persons.[33]

Eliminate "tracking," ability grouping, and achievement grouping — methods of grouping pupils which tend to increase the isolation of out-group members. Instead, develop task-oriented learning teams and discussion groups composed of pupils representing a variety of competency levels and racial and cultural backgrounds.

Suggestions for Reorganizing the Curriculum

Utilize learning modules (Unipacs, learning activities packages, contracts, study guides, etc.) as the basic organizational unit of the curriculum. Build into each module a variety of opportunities for pupils to make decisions about what they will learn, how they will learn, and what personnel and material resources they will utilize.

Provide, within the curriculum, a variety of independent study options. Organize the curriculum in such a way that pupils may proceed through courses of study at their own best rate. (Independent study is almost impossible so long as the curriculum is organized so that everyone in a class must proceed at the same rate.)[34]

Encourage the organization, by pupils and teachers, of *mini-courses* and projects activities which reflect their present interests and concerns.

Suggestions for Reorganizing the Schedule[35]

Implement a modular, block of time, daily demand, or combination type flexible schedule. Such a schedule will do much to facilitate open communication in the school and to provide pupils and staff members with increased opportunities for decision making regarding how they will spend their time in school.

Experiment with the extended school day and extended school year concept as a way of reducing crowded conditions in the school thereby making openness more manageable.

Provide common planning time for pupils and staff who are working together on school improvement projects.

Roles and Qualifications of the Staff

The kinds of activities suggested in this paper require a change in roles of staff members and a high level of staff competency and motivation.

Teacher roles and qualifications

Schools can become relatively free of the kind of pupil discipline problems currently plaguing them only if teachers learn how to help pupils get positively excited about learning. Teachers must learn how to listen more attentively and intelligently, organize learning activities more efficiently, communicate with pupils and with other staff members more positively, and delegate non-professional tasks more effectively. They must learn to organize the learning environment to meet pupil needs rather than their own. They must learn how learning takes place so that they can help learners master process as well as content.[36]

More specifically, teacher roles should change in the following ways:

Teacher roles from:	**to:**
Personal presenter of information to be memorized and reproduced on a test	Organizer of materials which provide learning options
Assignment-giver	Helper-advisor to the pupil as he chooses learning options appropriate to his needs, interests, and learning style
Manager of pupils	Manager of the learning environment to which pupils react
Talker *at* pupils	Talker *with* pupils

Pass signer, money collector, paper marker, test giver, machine operator, typist, ticket seller, etc.	Developer of new procedures for improving self-discipline and responsibility in the school. Action-researcher, contributor to school policy making
Evaluator of pupils	Diagnostician-prescriber who helps pupils learn how to evaluate their own learning activities and how to become self-diagnosing and prescribing individuals
Disciplinarian (giver of punishments, referring pupils to office, etc.)	Provider of controlled opportunities for all learners to make decisions regarding their own learning activities

Administrators and supervisors

The principal and his administrative staff are specialists, in much the same way as is a physics teacher, a librarian, or a school accountant. In the kind of open, flexible school described in this paper, the school administrator becomes a specialist in what the school as an institution believes in and values most highly. The administrators must be seen as the organizational, communications, philosophical leaders of the school. They also on occasion will originate ideas for school improvement and promote their implementation, but not in such a way as to discourage new ideas from other sources.

Supervisors must also be highly competent in organizational skills, means of opening communication lines, and ways to encourage widespread participation in decision making which is consistent with the stated belief and value statements defining the school. Such supervisors will help teachers learn to organize time, learners, and materials effectively so that communication lines are kept open and so that pupils are involved in making decisions concerning them.

Administrators and supervisors, through their own decisions, expressed opinions, and questions, must exemplify what the school stands for. They are the school's philosophy.

For administrators and supervisors to assume these kinds of leadership roles, they will have to find ways to delegate to others many tasks which now take up most of their time. Administrators and supervisors might well seek ways to delegate to less expensive personnel such tasks as filling out report forms, greeting visitors, seeing salesmen and purchasing equipment and supplies, hiring substitute teachers, laying out bus routes, and scheduling athletic contest. Trump[1] has suggested an economical way of re-organizing the school's administrative and supervisory staff so that time for leadership will become available.

As the school's disciplinary problems decrease, administrators will find that progressively less of their time will be spent on matters of pupil control. Time thus saved can be re-invested in educational leadership activities.

The in-service education program

The in-service education program for administrators, supervisors, and staff should be implemented in such a way that it exemplifies the educational principles which are being advocated. We are all familiar with the conventional teachers' meeting lecturer who violates his own principles as he makes a speech about individualizing instruction. Planners of in-service activities must demonstrate their commitment to the open, flexible school by organizing open, flexible, individualized in-service education programs.

More specifically, the in-service education program might have the following characteristics:

In-service activities are planned and coordinated by the school's development team in conjunction with various task forces working for school improvement.

Learning experiences for staff members evolve from those members' concerns as they work on school improvement projects.

Learning experiences for administrators and supervisors evolve from their concerns as they seek ways to support orderly, systematic change in the school.

Learning experiences for members of the development team evolve from team members' assessments of the kind of competencies needed to support change projects in the school.

Learning experiences should be process as well as content oriented. Staff members, while improving their competence in ways which seem important to themselves, are encouraged to evaluate the process of self-improvement as *well as the results.*

Communications skills are learned by staff

members as they seek better ways to communicate with one another so that they can make better progress in improving the school. With help, staff members can learn to utilize the communications skills which they have mastered in helping pupils communicate better with one another and with staff members.

Staff members learn how to encourage rational decision making by pupils through participation in task forces which make rational decisions regarding school improvement projects. Such groups evaluate the results of their activities in terms of processes as well as in terms of outcomes.

A series of formal discussion groups or large group presentations might well be organized as a means of informing a large number of staff members quickly about what is happening in the school. The most significant learning, however, probably will take place in the task forces and on the development team as these groups confront the real problems of eliminating the causes of pupil discipline problems.

Books, pamphlets, films, tapes, filmstrips, etc. should be made available to the staff as needed. The school librarian or materials specialist assumes the major responsibility of matching learning materials to individual needs.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the Program as a Whole

The suggestions for school improvement activities are designed to assist the school staff which desires to deal with causes as well as symptoms of pupil discipline problems. These causes lie deeply imbedded in the characteristics of the institution itself: the way it is organized, the roles assumed by staff members and learners, its communications structure, its belief and value system, and the manner in which decisions are made. Dealing with such causes is a long-term process and immediate, measurable, positive results may not be forthcoming.

Obviously, evaluation of the progress of the school as a whole, can be quite easily measured in terms of objectives such as those suggested earlier. It is fairly easy to chart progress, for example, regarding the number and seriousness of teacher initiated referrals, the number of pupils expelled or suspended, or the dollar value of vandalism each year.

Adequate evaluation plans can be devised which will clearly chart the overall progress of the school towards the objectives of the projects. Such a plan generally will include a clear statement of the objectives, translation of the objectives into answerable questions, design or acquisition of instruments which will provide information related to the questions, periodic use of the instruments to show (like a series of snapshots) what is happening in the school, periodic interpretation of the information thus obtained so that policy decisions regarding the project as a whole can be based on as much information as possible, conclusions, a series of generalizations summarizing what happened in the school over a period of time, and a plan for modifying the school on the basis of the findings.

A clear distinction should be made between evaluative information generated for public relations purposes and information generated for the purpose of guiding decision making regarding how the project should proceed. The kind of information which will answer the questions of a critical board member or a spokesman for a radical community pressure group may be quite useless in adjusting procedures within the project so that progress is accelerated.

Often, for example, laymen will ask questions which eventually boil down to something like this:

> "Suppose, instead of doing what you did, you had taken the 'tighten up and clamp down' approach? How do you know that approach wouldn't have been better?"

Such a question is, for all practical purposes, unanswerable. It is impossible for a school improvement program to take place twice in the same school so that progress under Plan A can be compared to progress under Plan B. Evaluators, of course, might use the *control schools and experimental* schools approach or the *time-series experimentation*[38] approach. The control school-experimental school technique is, however, expensive and difficult to organize, as many schools must be involved if the multitude of variables is to be controlled. Time-series experimentation techniques are more practical, but local talent to design such studies already may be over-committed or unavailable.

Perhaps it would be appropriate for project planners to identify for the school board and the public examples of the kinds of questions which the project is not designed to answer as well the kinds of questions it will answer.

Evaluation of Development Team and Task Force Activity

In addition to the more formal evaluative activities designed to chart the progress of the

project as a whole, members of each task force make decisions on a day to day basis regarding ways to achieve the short-term objectives of their group more effectively. Every effort must be made to assist task force members in linking such decisions to an informational base. Ordinarily, it would be the task of the development specialist on the development team to assist task force members in mastering this very important skill.

The linking of decision making to an informational base is a major competence needed by teachers if de-centralized decision making is to function on a professional (as opposed to an office politics) level.[39]

Briefly, the process consists of eleven steps:

1. Problem sensed (the group identifies a problem in the school which it feels is important enough to merit its attention)
2. Preliminary data collected (information which will help define the problem is obtained and interpreted)
3. Problem defined (the problem is defined in such a way that possible solutions can be suggested)
4. Invention (ways of dealing with the problem are suggested and the most promising solution adopted)
5. Fabrication (materials, schedules, and techniques are created which will support activities designed to resolve the problem)
6. Specific questions framed (questions are asked which, when answered, can guide the planning of the group regarding possible modification of its activities)
7. Evaluation system designed (the kind of information most likely to be helpful to the group is defined)
8. Instruments developed (information collecting instruments appropriate to the project are designed or acquired)
9. Information collected (the instruments are used)
10. Information analyzed (more relevant information separated from less relevant)
11. Information interpreted (decisions are made regarding the next steps to be taken on the basis of the group's interpretation of the meaning of the information gathered)

Task force members can, with assistance and practice, begin to base decisions on information as they seek new ways to improve the school. The process is not a difficult one. In fact, most school improvement groups usually go through all or most of the eleven steps in an informal way as they try various approaches to solve problems as they see them. What is suggested is a way of making more effective a decision making process with which teachers are already somewhat familiar.

CONCLUSION

Changing a school is somewhat like trying to convert a steam locomotive to diesel without stopping the train. One piece of the machinery must be replaced at a time, yet each piece must continue to function as a part of the system.

The usual approach to improving discipline in the school is the repressive approach — more rules, stricter enforcement, more efficient pupil surveillance, suspensions of privileges, additional rules imposed by the Board of Education, etc. School administrators, faced with increased public concern and lacking well-defined alternatives to such repressive measures, tend to accede to the public's pressure thereby making matters worse instead of better.

This paper can serve the educator who wants to take positive instead of negative steps towards improving school discipline.

The projects suggested herein, if taken together, add up to a comprehensive effort to modify the learning environment. Three major pieces of this environment have been considered: the belief and value system of the school, the school's communications systems, and the manner in which decisions are made within the institution. Significant changes in these important components of the institution itself will do much to remedy the causes of the discipline problems which plague us.

There are, of course, other components of the school environment which were treated only superficially or not at all. No specific suggestions were made for improving the grading system, for making the curriculum more relevant, for insuring daily success experiences for pupils, or for developing a spirit of service to others within the school. We leave these topics to others.

Progress can best be made in improving discipline through changing the nature of the school itself. The school is visualized as one place in the community — in many communities the only place — which might unify people around a commonly accepted, clearly stated belief and value system. The school is visualized as a place in which people communicate openly with one another across hierarchical, clique, racial, and age barriers; a school where the institution itself is continuously molded by the people in it; a school where people

work together in task forces dedicated to making the school a better place in which to live and work; a school where people participate in decision making regarding matters which concern them.

Hate, fear, suspicion, distrust, and prejudice will still be alive in such a school, as they are very much alive in the society of which the school is a part. But they will not thrive as they do in coercive schools. Discipline problems in our schools can be expected to diminish to the extent that we master new techniques for encouraging people to work together for a common cause.

[1]Gallup, George, *How the Nation Views the Public Schools,* 1969, a CFK, Ltd. Report, Melbourne, Florida: Institute for Development of Educational activities, p. 7 The 1970 Annual Gallup Poll on *How the Nation Views the Public Schools* also reports discipline to be the major complaint regarding the schools.

[2]Ibid. p. 10

[3]Summaries of these papers by CFK Ltd. Associates and consultants are available from CFK, Ltd. on request.

[4]Miles, Matthew *Planned Change and Organizational Health,* pp. 11-34 in Carlson, Richard O., *Change Processes in the Public Schools,* Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, University of Oregon, 1965.

[5]Dewey, John and Arthur F. Bentley, *The Knowing and the Known,* Boston: The Beacon Press, 1949, pps. 67-69, 103.

[6]McLuhan, Marshall, *Understanding Media,* New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1964, Chapter 3.

[7]Glasser, William, *Schools Without Failure,* New York: Harper and Row, 1969, passim.

[8]Combs, Arthur W., *A Perceptual View of the Adequate Personality, Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming,* Ed. by Arthur W. Combs, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1962, pp. 50-64.

[9]Maslow, Abraham H., *Some Basic Propositions of a Growth and Self Actualizing Psychology, Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming,* Ed. by Arthur W. Combs, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1962, Chapter 3.

[10]Kelley, Earl C., *The Fully Functioning Self, Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming,* Ed. by Arthur W. Combs, Washington, D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1962, pp. 9-20.

[11]*Flexible school* may be defined as one in which time schedules, staffing plans, the curriculum, and pupil grouping patterns are determined less by fixed schedules, organizational charts, and unchanging rules and regulations and more by the immediate needs of teachers and learners. Such a school need not be disorderly. Flexible schools are extremely well-organized. The organization, however, services people rather than dominating, oppressing, and confining them.

[12]See Glines, Don E., *Implementing Different and Better Schools,* Mankato, Minnesota: Campus Publishers, 1969, pp. 10-11.

[13]A development team is a talent pool developed within the school for the purpose of stimulating and supporting well-designed and well-evaluated innovative projects. A design team also fosters innovation but is more involved in the administration of the school. For more details see: Howard, Eugene R. and Monroe, Rowland, *The School Based Development Team as a Means of Fostering Rational Decision Making in Educational Institutions,* Fort Lauderdale, Florida, International Learning Corp., 1969, 33 pp. and Glines, Don E., op. cit. pp. 10-11.

[14]Committee on Assessing the Progress of Education, *Citizenship Objectives,* Ann Arbor, Michican, 1969, 57 pp.

[15]Further information regarding this concept can be obtained from Kyrios, Alexander H. *A Prescription for Personal Development,* a publication of Directorate, U.S. Dependents Schools, European area, 20 pp.

[16]Further information on this concept may be obtained from George White, Principal, Bella Vista High School, 8301 Madison Avenue, Fair Oaks, California 95608.

[17]See Pino, Edward and Armistead, Walter, *Toward a More Relevent Secondary School Curriculum, North Central Association Quarterly,* Vol. XLIII, No. 3 winter, 1969, pp. 269-276.

[18]See Kapfer, Philip and Swenson, Gardner, *Individualized Instruction for Self-Paced Learning, The Clearing House,* March, 1968, pp. 405-410.

[19]See Brown, B. Frank, *Education By Appointment,* West Nyack, N.Y., Parker Publishing Company, 1969.

[20]See Glasser, William, *Schools Without Failure,* New York, Harper & Row, 1969, chapter 10 "Classroom Meetings", pp. 122-144.

[21]See Corey, Stephen M., *Action Research to Improve School Practices,* New York Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953.

[22]As in the Lakewood Senior High School, 14100 Franklin Blvd., Lakewood, Ohio (Principal - Dr. Kimball Howes).

[23]Bell Junior High School, Jefferson County, School District R-1 1580 Yarrow Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215 (Principal - Dr. George Carnie).

[24]See Scheim, Edgar H. and Bennis, Warren G., *Personnel and Organizational Change Through Group Methods,* New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1965, Chapter 2, *What is Laboratory Training?,* pp. 10-27.

[25]*Achievement Motivation* is a term used by the Stone Foundation Stone-Brandel Center in Chicago to describe a cluster of procedures to stimulate a positive learning environment. See Dinkmeyer, Donald and Dreikurs, Rudolph, *Encouraging Children to Learn: The Encouragement Process,* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

[26]As suggested in IDEA'S pamphlet *Student Activism and the Relevency of Schooling,* p. 16 IDEA, Melbourne, Florida, 31 pp.

[27]This idea has been successfully implemented at Miami Springs Senior High School, 751 Dove Avenue, Miami Springs, Florida. Further information is available from the school's Curriculum Bulletin #5, *A Courage of a Different Order,* 1969.

[28]See Wallin, William H., *Strategies for a Good School Environment, Instructor,* August-September, 1969, pp. 58-59. Wollin, Principal of the Ruby Thomas School in Las Vegas, Nevada, describes how forming learning teams resulted in increased pupil involment and in a decrease in discipline problems.

[29]Townsend, Robert, *Up The Organization,* New York, Alfred A. Knopp, 1970, pp. 22-23.

[30]See Griffiths, Daniel E., David Clark, Richard Wynn, and Lawrence Iannaccone, *Organizing Schools for Effective Education,* Danville, Illinois, The Interstate Printers and Publishers, 1962, p. 22.

[31]Trump, J. Lloyd, *Changes Needed for Further Improvement of Secondary Education in the United States. The Bulletin* of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Vol. 53, No. 333, January, 1969, pp. 119-123.

[32]The Ridgewood High School 7500 W. Montrose, Norridge, Illinois has operated on such a plan for the past ten years.

[33]This reorganization can be accomplished within existing teacher-pupil ratios if formal groups do not meet daily and if the overall ratios in the laboratories are 1-30 or more.

[34]Kapfer, *op cit* p. 407. See also Howard, Eugene R., *Developing Sequential Learning Material,* 9 pages, illustrated, available from the author at 25¢ a copy. The University School, 3301 College Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33314.

[35]See the IDEA Occasional Paper, *The Flexibly Scheduled School of 1980,* Institute for Development of Educational Activities, 1969, Melbourne, Florida. For additional suggestions see Bush, Robert N. and Dwight W. Allen, *A New Design for High School Education Assuming a Flexible Schedule,* chapter 8, *First Steps in Flexible Scheduling,* New York, McGraw Hill, 1964, pp. 88-117.

[36]Parker, J. Cecil and Rubin, Louis J., *Process as Content,* Rand McNally, 1967.

[37]*Op. cit.,* p. 122.

[38]N.L. Gage, *Handbook of Research on Teaching,* Chicago, Rand McNally, 1963, Chapter 5, Campbell, Donald T. and Julian C. Stanley, *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs.*

[39]A detailed description of this process is provided in Howard, Eugene R., *op. cit.,* p. 21-23.

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